

Media Release

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Adelaide Hills to apply for non-GM crop area designation

Adelaide Hills Council will apply to the Minister for Primary Industries for the district to be designated a non-GM crop area following a unanimous Council decision last night.

Deputy Mayor Nathan Daniell said extensive consultation highlighted the importance of protecting the region's reputation as a source of high-value, premium product with a clear emphasis on sustainability and environmental consciousness.

"The Adelaide Hills is renowned for producing high value premium products reflective of our clean and green reputation which has been fostered over many years. Remaining GM free would protect this brand and maintain important market and trade advantages for our primary producers," Deputy Mayor Daniell said.

The consultation process demonstrated GM food crops remains an important issue for our region reflected by the high levels of participation by business, associations, and community members. Council received 266 feedback responses culminating in a Council workshop which informed last night's decision to apply for non-GM crop status and remain GM free.

Following a robust and extensive consultation process, 76 per cent of respondents indicated their support for Council applying to the Minister to be designated as a no GM food crop area. While there were a variety of views amongst businesses and associations, the majority support no GM crop designation.

"Our decision follows extensive consultation with industry, business and the community which ensured we made an informed decision reflective of their views."

"Business and association feedback, particularly the Adelaide Hills Wine Region (AHWR) submission, have clearly stated that allowing GM crops into our region will negatively impact on their market and trade potential. The AHWR demonstrated that failing to achieve an exemption would put \$10 million of Adelaide Hills world class wine exports at stake (60 per cent of our annual wine exports). This is an unacceptable risk for our local producers."

"Seeking this exemption is a once in a lifetime opportunity where our region has a lot to gain and little to lose.

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“Remaining GM free protects our premium clean and green brand while not disadvantaging local producers who support GM crops, given there are no GM food crop varieties currently available for commercial cultivation that favour producers in the Council area.”

“Furthermore, our decision is strongly backed by our community with 83 per cent of community respondents supporting the region remaining GM free for marketing and trade purposes”.

Importantly, some of our neighbouring and surrounding Councils including the Mount Barker District Council, Alexandrina Council, The Barossa Council, District Council of Yankalilla and The City of Onkaparinga, have all resolved to apply to the Minister for non GM designation.

“Our decision opens the door for a regional designation to be implemented which would strengthen the marketing advantage of the Adelaide Hills, Barossa and Fleurieu regions as a premium food and beverage destination and ensure there is no economic detriment to the region as a result of the GM moratorium being lifted,” said Deputy Mayor Daniell.

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